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SUBJECT: SECURITY ENVIRONMENT PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE SPRING
2009 U.S. EMBASSY BELGRADE

REF: 09 STATE 013023

SECURITY ENVIRONMENT PROFILE (SEPQ) - BELGRADE

(U) POLITICAL VIOLENCE

I. (U) DEMONSTRATIONS

A. ARE THERE ANY ETHNIC OR RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN-COUNTRY
PRONE TO CARRY OUT SIGNIFICANT ANTI-AMERICAN
DEMONSTRATIONS?

Yes, the declaration of the independence of Kosovo has for many Serbs created a belief that the United States is the leader in usurping the sovereignty of the Serbian state by supporting the independence of Kosovo.

i. HAVE THERE BEEN ANTI-AMERICAN DEMONSTRATIONS IN THE
COUNTRY WITHIN THE LAST 12 MONTHS?

Yes, in March 2007 members of the Radical Serb Party (SRS) held a demonstration outside the U.S. Embassy. It was a well organized demonstration in which the SRS party bused in demonstrators and also provided their own security personnel so that things would not get out of hand. Embassy Belgrade had experienced two attacks by Serbs angry over the Declaration of Independence by Kosovo and the United States recognition of Kosovo as an independent state. February 17, 2008, a large demonstration occurred outside the U.S. Embassy resulting in damage to the facility by approximately 200 rioters who were repelled by police after the initial attack. February 21, 2008, a scheduled and government organized demonstration escalated into an attack on several diplomatic missions, the U.S. Embassy bearing the brunt of the damage, as reported widely on CNN. Approximately 1000 plus rioters assaulted the U.S. Embassy breaching the perimeter. Police failed to respond for over an hour as rioters set fire to the embassy and attempted to penetrate the hard line. Physical security systems and tear gas prevented rioters from breaching the hard line.

ii. No, other than the U.S. Embassy no other U.S. facility has seen demonstrations.

iii. Large organized demonstrations have seen numbers in the thousands.

iv. Past and current demonstrations have usually been triggered by U. S. foreign policy initiatives relating to the independence of Kosovo.

B. ARE DEMONSTRATIONS GENERALLY VIOLENT OR PEACEFUL?

U.S. Embassy Belgrade has been evacuated seven times since the 1970s. Before February 2008, the Embassy was evacuated in 1999 and gutted by rioters after our departure. Since our return in 2001, the U.S. Embassy has been attacked by rioters in 2004 and twice in 2008.

i. Yes, the attack on February 17, 2008 resulted in damage to FEBR windows and doors of the Consular Section. The attack on February 21, 2008 resulted in damage to FEBR windows and doors in CAC-1, CAC-2, structural damage

resulting from a fire set by rioters inside areas of the Embassy's perimeter used as a crush zone but not used as office space. Grills were ripped off the building, walk through metal detector destroyed and the x-ray machine in CAC-2 (Consular CAC) destroyed.

ii. Yes, from DVR video we know that at least seven individuals penetrated our perimeter security line on February 21, 2008. One individual penetrated the compound and caused damage to one office and FEBR door to the chancery.

1C. HAVE ANY ANTI-GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATIONS TAKEN PLACE IN THE HOST COUNTRY WITHIN THE LAST 12 MONTHS?

Yes, demonstrations against privatization, wage issues, military pensions, and taxi regulation and the arrest of Radovan Karadzic have occurred and in the Karadzic case still continue on a daily basis, in 2008.

i. Yes, anti-government demonstrations have occurred within two blocks of the U.S. Embassy and other diplomatic missions. Host government offices are located near these missions.

ii. Anti-government demonstrations vary in size from 50 to 1,000 demonstrators.

iii. Anti-government demonstrations are generally peaceful with the exception of July 29, 2008 when ultra nationalists (OBRAZ) engaged police during a peaceful downtown rally by the Serbian Radical Party (SRS). Police used rubber bullets and tear gas to subdue the rioters. Damage was sustained to businesses downtown. Rioters never approached the U.S. Embassy.

iv. As described earlier demonstrations based upon U.S. policy have occurred resulting in damage to U.S. Embassy. However, anti-government demonstrations directed towards the Serbian government have not resulted in damage to any U.S. facility.

(SBU) MACRO CONFLICT CONDITIONS

1A. Serbia is currently engaged in a diplomatic and political dispute over the Independence of Kosovo. With Kosovo's declaration of Independence in February 2008 and the resulting recognition by members of the international community, Serbia maintains support for Serbs residing in enclaves within Northern Kosovo primarily the Mitrovica area. There is a push for separate or rather parallel governments, one for ethnic Serbs and one for ethnic Albanians. There have been demonstrations and confrontations with UN Security forces at border crossings between Serbia and the Mitrovica area of Northern Kosovo. Clashes with UMIK security forces and ethnic Serbs have occurred at local government facilities in towns located in the Mitrovica area of Northern Kosovo.

1B. Currently the political rhetoric is "Kosovo is Serbia" has been confined to Northern Kosovo's Mitrovica area. With passions and tensions high and the presence of militia groups, both ethnic Albanian and ethnic Serb, it could spread into Southern Serbia and throughout the Mitrovica region. Incidents could cause reverberations in Belgrade.

1C. No U.S. Diplomatic facilities are located in the Mitrovica area of Northern Kosovo that comes under the Chief of Mission's authority in Belgrade. There is a USAID facility in the Novi Pazar located in Southern Serbia.

1D. As previously described anti-American rhetoric is high regarding the Kosovo issue. The events of February 17th and 21st are examples of the political gamesmanship displayed to influence or met out American responsibility for Kosovo's independence.

III. (U) HOST COUNTRY CAPABILITIES

1A. Law enforcement agencies are for the most part professional and well trained; however, they suffer from the bureaucratic systems still in effect from the socialist era. Requests for assistance are required in writing and responses are extremely slow.

1B. The ILEA, ATA, EXBIS, and ICITAP programs provide substantial vehicle for training Serbian Security Forces. The U.S. Embassy Belgrade facilitated Serbia in having its first FBI Academy graduate in June 2008. Personal relationships developed by post personnel through these training programs and the programs themselves have developed a cadre of officers dedicated to professionalism with a regional view about crime and terrorism. Notwithstanding the events of February 21, 2008 in which police failed to respond because of political decisions within the Ministry of Interior, commanding officers of at least two special police units acted on their own initiative to respond and secure a perimeter around the Embassy to provide a corridor for emergency fire responders and help sweep and secure the Embassy compound. The training provided through Embassy programs is immensely popular and provides an invaluable asset to Post's security.

1C. Yes, the fall of the Eastern Bloc and the increasing organized crime which accompanied the breakup of intelligence services and provided new opportunities for their networks, tradecraft, and operational skills created a lucrative business in smuggling drugs, weapons, and trafficking in persons. Serbia is uniquely located geographically at the center of the Balkan Peninsula and provides a trafficking back door to Europe. The Southern border of Serbia with Kosovo and the militia and criminal groups created during and after the 1990s conflict provides a vehicle for organized crime and others. This creates an opportunity to corrupt underpaid police and border guards.

1D. Yes, both the Intelligence Services and Security

Services have demonstrated some effectiveness in deterring terrorist activities. The arrest in May 2007 of a group of Muslim extremists identified as "Wahhabi" (reported in 08 Belgrade 0003 "OSAC Crime and Safety Report) were arrested along with weapons, food, and copies of a Serbian translated Al Quaida manual cached in the Sanjak area of Southern Serbia. The group also had in their possession a laptop computer with a map of Belgrade, identifying the U.S. Embassy and the Serbian National landmarks. The arrest of these individuals prompted the Ministry of Interior to create a new anti-terrorist investigation unit. Again because of Serbia's well-positioned location as a primary land route to Europe, it provides a possible avenue of transit for international terrorism.

1E. No, with the U.S. recognition of Kosovo the Serbian government policy has been no contact with those countries that have recognized Kosovo as an independent state. This policy has applied to the intelligence services also.

1F. Yes, see section D. above regarding the "Wahhabi" case.

1G. No, as displayed on February 21, 2008 the Serbian police, as ordered by political chicanery, walked away from the U.S. Embassy leaving it vulnerable to an open attack by mobs of hooligans possibly organized and in the pay of politicians. However, since new elections were held in June 2008 and a new government installed, police support to the U.S. Embassy has been very responsive. A large demonstration on July 29, 2008 in which hooligans engaged police in downtown Belgrade never approached the U.S. Embassy. Police assured that demonstrators would not approach the U.S. or British Embassies within four blocks. None did. Daily demonstrations occur in downtown Belgrade directed at the new Serbian government and although these demonstrations impact traffic they remain relatively small. A demonstration on August 4, 2008 was directed at the

Croatian Embassy a block away from the U. S. Embassy. Demonstrators were protesting the anniversary of Croatian operation "Storm." Protestors stopped in front of both the Croatian and U.S. Embassies but remained peaceful. Police have conducted high level meetings with the Minister of Interior on the failures of police response on the night of February 21, 2008. The Minister of Interior has passed along to police and conveyed to the U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission and Regional Security Officer that no diplomatic mission will be attacked or entered, especially the U.S. Embassy.

¶H. Airport Security: Good/Average

¶I. Customs and Immigration: Average

¶J. Border Patrol Forces: Average

¶7. INDIGENOUS TERRORISM

¶I. (U) ANTI-AMERICAN TERRORIST GROUPS

¶A. No.

¶B. N/A

¶C. No

¶D. No

¶E. No

¶F. No

¶G. N/A

¶H. N/A

II. OTHER INDIGENOUS TERRORIS GROUPS

¶A. Serbian authorities arrested 15 individuals with cached weapons, explosives, and ammunition in March 2007 and another 4 individuals in connection with the "Wahhabi" case in October 2007. The trial is still in progress.

¶B. Wahhabi

¶C. No

¶D. No

¶E. No

¶8. TRANSNATIONAL TERRORISM

¶I. TRANSNATIONAL TERRORISM INDICATORS

¶A. None known of

¶B. N/A

¶C. No, Serbia is sensitive to outside forces operating within Serbia. The creation of a new anti-terrorist unit exemplifies their understanding and sensitivity. Transnational or international terrorism concerns within Serbia are the same for the rest of the Balkans. Belgrade sits on a primary land route between the Middle East and Western Europe.

¶D. None known of

¶E. The area of Southern Serbia, know as Sandzak is a Muslim enclave within Serbia. In 2007 a rivalry between two factions of the Serbian Islamic Community erupted in clashes between the faction supported by Belgrade and a faction supported by Sarajevo. These conflicts appear to be confined to clashes with each other for control of

traditional Islamic holdings in Serbia. As described earlier the "Wahhabi" case provides some understanding of the capabilities and support mechanisms available in this area. Serbian authorities arrested 15 individuals with cached weapons, explosives, and ammunition in March 2007 and another 4 individuals in connection with this case in October 2007. The trial is on-going. This group does not appear to be directed by outside listed extremist organizations, although there is evidence of contact with groups outside of Serbia.

F. Iran, Iraq, and Syria all have missions in Serbia. Their interest in the American target is no less nor no greater than that in any other country from an intelligence standpoint. From a terrorist standpoint, because of Serbia's sensitivity to outsiders acts within their territory and the recent events of political violence already directed at the U.S. Embassy, Serbia is sensitive to and most recently responsive to Post's needs.

G. Small arms and other weapons are widely available and very inexpensive in the region Although Serbia has restrictions governing the sale of ammunition and strict weapons laws going so far as making mace and some knives illegal to carry without a permit. Trafficking in arms is a lucrative business for organized crime. Smuggling of weapons either into or out of Bosnia and/or Kosovo, and Montenegro is not uncommon. It is reported that the "Wahhabi" group received weapons, ammunition, and explosives from Bosnia and possibly Kosovo and money from Saudi Arabia.